

The SFV Development Group Charter Planning Grant Application
Los Angeles Unified School District: CDS Code: 19-64733
Proposal Abstract

**The Multicultural Learning Center
brings together a diverse community of learners
where cultural and individual differences
are the building blocks of academic, social, and interpersonal success.**

The Need - The Multicultural Learning Center is committed to the belief that the role of a school, indeed its liability, is to equalize the educational and social differences of students by maximizing learning opportunities for all, regardless of the educational and social differences it inherits. Attracting families, students, and staff that represent an ethnic collage of the diversity inherent in the San Fernando Valley, the Center will operate in a culture of cooperation and collaboration to identify and practice strategies that narrow or eliminate the achievement gap between students at-risk and those who succeed by current standards of assessment.

Our Educational Vision - Elementary and middle school children will get to know and respect one another through group interaction and use of the arts as tools for developing multicultural understanding and developing literacy. Students learn about their own and each others' cultures by exploring their family stories, natural environment, history, and community and by having opportunities to learn and express themselves through writing, performing, and creating. Students engage in projects that develop problem-solving, critical thinking, and analytical skills as well as group interaction and social skills. In the context of compelling themes, they discover for themselves ways to construct meaning through a variety of learning experiences including doing research, creating individual and group projects, and making connections with the community. In addition, the Center offers the opportunity for all students to become biliterate in Spanish and English.

Through a team-teaching approach using a thematic interdisciplinary curriculum, teachers form teams to support each other, increase their competencies and repertoire, and provide peer feedback to insure continuous professional growth. Parents will form a cooperative and collaborative partnership with the Center, actively participating in the social, emotional, physical, aesthetic, and cognitive development of their child(ren).

The major goal of this project is to develop and complete a charter school petition for submission to the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education by January 2001. Our objectives over the course of the 18-month project are to:

- Develop a school design and organization that supports our mission
- Identify a fully-integrated multicultural curriculum
- Explore cutting-edge dual immersion programs
- Research and develop assessment protocols
- Enroll parents, educators, and community groups in the vision and development of the Center
- Develop a business plan and resources for start-up

SFV Development Group
The Multicultural Learning Center

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Proposal Abstract

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I. The Multicultural Learning Center's Educational Vision

A. Baseline Information About the School

- **Demographic characteristics and performance levels of the students it is seeking to serve.**
- **Characteristics of the community (ies) in which these students live.**

The San Fernando Valley is a suburban enclave of secluded hillside estates and upper and middle class single family homes, mixed with moderate income apartment complexes, and low-income, immigrant housing. Located in the northwest quadrant of the Los Angeles Unified School District, the Valley Clusters serve 200,000 students, half of whom attend elementary schools. Many schools in neighborhoods serving primarily Latino students are on year-round multi-track schedules, while schools in the more affluent areas with the largest concentration of white

students in the district, have been closed, converted to other uses, or opened to children from over-crowded inner city schools. Over the past five years, due to surging enrollment throughout the district, the number of seats available to ease overcrowding has dropped from a high of 22,000 when the program began, to 7,400 for the current school year.

The following table depicts the ethnicity of students by percent of the district total in the eight San Fernando Valley (SFV) clusters in 1998 compared with students district-wide. The pattern is clear. In the San Fernando Valley, White students are represented by more than twice the district average while Black students are represented by half the district average. Asian students have slightly higher representation in the Valley while Hispanic students are underrepresented. Additionally, the Hispanic population is concentrated in the north and east sectors of the Valley, while the White population is more heavily represented in the south and west sectors.

Comparison of San Fernando Valley Ethnic Representation with District Averages
Figures represent percent of total population

	Other	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Elementary district-wide	2.2	3.8	13.1	71.0	9.9
Elementary SFV	2.5	5.0	6.1	64.4	22.0
K-12 district-wide	2.5	4.3	13.8	68.5	10.9
K-12 SFV	2.6	6.2	6.6	62.5	22.3

Achievement levels on the Stanford 9 for children attending the 8 Valley Clusters as compared to district-wide scores follow the state and national trends of higher achievement by Asians and Whites compared to Hispanics and Blacks.

With very few exceptions, most public schools perpetuate the educational and social differences they inherit, increasing the gap between those of comfort and those of poverty. The Multicultural Learning Center intends to demonstrate how to reverse that trend in the San Fernando Valley. Parents from a mix of cultures and economic backgrounds will choose to enroll their children at the Center because they identify with the principles and values inherent in the Center's vision.

B. Educational Vision

- Broad, overall program goals

**The Multicultural Learning Center
brings together a diverse community of learners
where cultural and individual differences
are the building blocks of academic, social, and interpersonal success.**

The founders, staff, and community of the Multicultural Learning Center are committed to the belief that the role of a school, indeed its liability, is to equalize the educational and social

differences of students by maximizing learning opportunities for all. The Center will identify and practice strategies that reverse the trends of social injustice produced by poverty and alienation, thus narrowing or eliminating the achievement gap between students at-risk and those who succeed by current standards of assessment.

The Center brings together elementary and middle school-age children from families of varied backgrounds who live or work in the San Fernando Valley. Children get to know and respect one another through group interaction and use of the arts as tools for developing multicultural understanding and for developing literacy. Students learn about their own and each others' cultures by exploring their family stories, natural environment, history, and community and having opportunities to learn and express themselves through writing, performing, and creating. Students engage in projects that develop problem-solving, critical thinking, and analytical skills as well as group interaction and social skills. In the context of compelling themes, they discover for themselves ways to construct meaning through a variety of learning experiences including doing research, creating individual and group projects, and making connections with the community. In addition, the Center wishes to take advantage of research that shows that second languages are learned more readily at an early age by offering opportunities for all students to become bilingual in Spanish and English starting in Kindergarten.

Students will work individually and cooperatively, learning from both adults and their peers in multi-age classrooms, as they make choices, negotiate ideas, and gain competencies. Participation in community service projects provides the opportunity to explore and practice what it means to be a responsible citizen. Parents model active citizenship by contributing their time and expertise to assist the school in meeting its goals. Organizations that encourage community service, multicultural understanding, and the value of the arts as a tool for building multicultural understanding and developing literacy will contribute to the school's educational program by providing resource specialists and conducting after-school programs. Our goals for students will be achieved through a team-teaching approach using a thematic interdisciplinary curriculum. Teachers with strengths in different disciplines form teams to support each other, increase their competencies and repertoire, and provide peer feedback to insure continuous professional growth. Teachers can then best provide the richest environment for learners to construct their emerging theories of the world.

- Philosophical, theory, and research base for the vision

Many researchers have influenced the Center's vision of how learners develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, physically and aesthetically. The Center embraces the theories of **Jean Piaget**, recognizing the importance of developmentally appropriate environments, materials and practices as learners construct knowledge through interaction with the objects, events, and people in their environment. They must self-select and actively participate in activities and projects that allow for exploration and self-discovery—allowing them to construct their own meaning for themselves. **Howard Gardner's** theory of multiple intelligences supports our notion that developmentally appropriate classrooms, with a wide range of materials that support all intelligences, insuring development of the oft-neglected artistic intelligences, provide learners with opportunities to explore and develop each intelligence. Flexible groupings and team teaching provide opportunities for learners to work with peer and adult "experts." And learners need opportunities to use their strengths in one intelligence to learn in another intelligence.

Lev Vygotsky's work supports the importance of social communication between individuals for development of language and higher mental functions; thus the need for flexible group work, coaching from skillful peers and knowledgeable adults to maximize assisted discovery. Vygotsky's research also stresses the importance of reflection and kid watching as assessment tools for learners—teachers and students alike. Synthesized research on the human brain and learning by **Leslie A. Hart** reinforces the need for time and many different learning experiences in order to develop structures in the brain that allow children to make sense of concepts. A child's previous experiences should always be considered when planning instruction. The need for a safe, supportive environment is critical if students are to reach their learning potential. Emotions and feelings play a critical role in learning.

Benjamin Blooms' six levels of thinking and reasoning support the notion that if children are to develop higher-level thinking skills they must be asked—and encouraged to ask—questions and participate in activities that allow them to think and learn at high levels.

Elliot Eisner, a professor of education and art at Stanford, stresses the importance of the development of multiple forms of representation, or symbol systems, to represent what we think. Schools need to provide a curriculum that provides opportunity to develop, use, and practice all of these forms since different forms develop different cognitive skills and the choice of the form influences what you think.

In the area of school reform and professional development, our thinking has been influenced by **Milbrey McLaughlin, Judith Warren Little, Linda Darling Hammond, Jeannie Oakes, Michael Fullan, and Carney Barnett.**

- Specific educational objectives that will be accomplished through the school

The Multicultural Learning Center has 10 educational objectives for all of its students. All students will:

1. Be literate—read, write, listen, and speak—in English and Spanish
 - Use prior knowledge and personal experience as well as knowledge about language to construct meaning from what they've read.
 - Learn writing skills and strategies by writing across a variety of genres for the purpose of learning how to write, demonstrating knowledge (e.g. research, reports, content information), and for real-life purposes and audiences (e.g. letters, technical writing, persuasive pieces, fiction, nonfiction, poetry).
 - Use oral language skills such as voice, articulation, eye contact, and gesture to communicate effectively to a variety of audiences.
2. Use the arts to develop their multiple intelligences, solve problems, make connections across disciplines, gain an understanding of self and an appreciation of others, and function to their fullest potential.
3. Achieve competency in mathematics skills and concepts and apply them to solve problems and present information.

4. Use scientific skills such as observing, classifying, inferring and measuring in the study of all topics and in producing reports.
5. Demonstrate motor and fitness skills, plus the knowledge that accompanies those skills to have a productive and healthy lifestyle.
6. Learn social studies concepts, skills, and attitudes by constructing ideas and acquiring them through reading, listening, speaking, observing, inquiring, and problem solving.
7. Become independent learners and responsible citizens by participating in community service projects, and learning about themselves, how to relate to others, be productive thinkers, and be self-directed.
8. Use a variety of technologies to do research and show what they know.
9. Complete research projects demonstrating the ability to select appropriate and varied resources such as the library, community, peers, parents, and the Internet.
10. Have a love for learning, belief in their abilities as multi-talented knowledge-seekers with emerging theories of the world.

- Summary of what the charter hopes to achieve and how it will be different from what is available currently for students, parents and teachers in that community.

The Center will sustain and create an efficacious learning community that promotes a culture of cooperation and collaboration rather than compliance and complaint. Attracting families, students, and staff that represent an ethnic collage of the diversity inherent in the San Fernando Valley, the Center will insure learning at the highest level for all students, regardless of the educational and social differences it inherits. Though there are individual classrooms in schools where these practices exist, there are none where the vision is school-wide nor where the promotion of cultural and social understanding has the potential to impact the total community.

II. Description of Grant Project Goals and Activities for Approval of a Charter Proposal

A. Grant Project Goals and Objectives

- Tangible work product at the end of the project

- Individuals responsible for completion of work

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Over the past year, a core Design Team of seven individuals began to evolve the mission and vision of the Center. These individuals have assumed responsibility for meeting the planning grant objectives and will be aided by the wisdom and vision of individuals and organizations joining our effort as we continue our research and community outreach efforts. Currently on the team are four outstanding classroom teachers who have demonstrated success using integrated

curriculum, constructivist principles in multicultural environments, and use of authentic classroom assessments, and are experienced in conducting professional development and providing peer coaching. Each contributes a special area of expertise. Robin Potchka is completing her administrative credential, and is an expert in literacy and intervention programs as well as experienced in school operations. Marty Radanovich, a bilingual teacher and native Spanish-speaker, has proven success in developing second language skills and will lead our dual immersion research. Julie Flanagan is a bilingual teacher who has designed and implemented district-wide summer school programs to improve literacy and will lead our exploration into team teaching, looping, multi-age and other school organization options. Carol Wright has worked in numerous national sites in the area of standards alignment and professional development specializing in primary education and strategies for the emergent reader. Karen De Jarnette holds her doctorate in research and evaluation with an emphasis in the role of the arts in developing literacy among second-language learners and will guide our assessment efforts. Gayle Nadler is a public relations writer with experience in educational research and documenting many facets of teacher change and will direct our community outreach and networking efforts. Toby Bornstein, executive director of the SFV Development Group, contributes a teaching career coupled with 15 years experience in school reform, strategic planning, and non-profit management. She is responsible for liaison with LAUSD, resource development, financial planning, and overall coordination for development of the charter petition.

B. Identification of Planning Needs for the Development of an Effective School

1. Educational Capacity

- Activities or plans for developing innovative strategies and proven methods of learning and teaching

The Design Team has come together because its members have a common vision and a common experience. All of us have been involved with the work of the Galef Institute and its exemplary interdisciplinary curriculum, *Different Ways of Knowing* (DWoK). We see it as the core around which we will educate students and build multicultural understanding and community. DWoK is a social studies based thematic curriculum, infused with the arts and rich with opportunities to build multicultural understanding and develop listening, speaking, and writing skills and artistic forms of expression. It features a discovery model of learning that includes building on what you already know, doing research that relies on primary sources of data and pursuit of student questions, developing expertise, and making connections to the community.

We want to expand the curriculum and strategies offered around this core, and will evaluate or develop additional curriculum that support use of the arts, furthers multicultural understanding, and expands the repertoire of teaching strategies available to our staff. In particular we want to identify mathematics and science curriculum that complement the *Different Ways of Knowing* themes and support our constructivist view of learning. We will carefully examine California's newly approved language arts and mathematics content standards and drafts of those in social science and science to guide the process of curriculum selection. We want to insure curriculum alignment with both the state standards and our school vision so that students will achieve on both standardized tests and site-based assessments. Exploration and identification of exemplary Internet sites that provide additional content and resources will be included in our research.

We will research and evaluate language immersion programs, interview participants including students, teachers, and parents and assess their results. Then we will adopt or adapt the program most likely to benefit our students.

We will interview Linda Hargan, executive director of the Kentucky Collaborative for Teaching and Learning and others she recommends to assess the benefits of the ungraded primary school. Our current thinking is to group students according to their developmental progress within multi-age classes for K, K-1, 1-2, 2-3, 3-4 and 4-5. Teachers will team-teach, with children staying together for more than one year with the same pair of teachers (one of whom is fluent in Spanish), forming a learning family. Within classrooms, flexible grouping and regrouping for instruction will occur to meet the needs, abilities, and interests of students.

Students eligible for special services to meet unique learning needs, such as gifted education, special education, Title I, basic skills remediation, and English as a second language, will, to the maximum extent possible, receive these services in the general education setting in the classroom. We will spend considerable time conferring with the Special Education and Language Acquisition Units of the LAUSD, Lawndale School District, and the local Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA).

- **Plans to develop clear and measurable outcomes for student performance**
- **Plans to develop comprehensive student assessment program aligned with the school's educational mission and student outcomes.**

The Center's current student performance outcomes are listed on pages 3 and 4 of this document and are certain to be revised throughout the planning process. We will assess that students are attaining the goals and standards specified in our charter through continuous progress records, portfolios, state standardized tests, student performances assessed by teaching teams, and through the adaptation of several components of Kentucky's Early Learning Profile (KELP). Reforms in the state of Kentucky have utilized *Different Ways of Knowing* as a strategy for their primary program. KELP provides assessment strategies and tools for teachers to collect student data, have conversations with parents and children, maintain anecdotal records, and analyze and record student performances.

We intend to collect and gather information to share during parent and student conferences, in progress reports to parents, during team planning, governing board meetings and in the school's annual reports. Analysis of this data will reveal gaps in curriculum in light of school, district, and state standards. Using this information, teacher teams will identify the need for new teaching strategies and professional development. The data will also provide direction for the governing board to create new policies and/or structures that support teaching and learning.

To develop this capacity, we will research and compile assessment tools that staff will evaluate as part of their initial and ongoing professional development, beginning with the Kentucky Early Learning Profile (KELP). The Kentucky model enables the **improvement of both teaching and learning** in the context of formative assessment by providing a continuous progress model across a 5 stage continuum: 1) beginning, 2) developing, 3) competent, 4) expanding, and 5) accomplished. As part of our work we will align this instrument with the completed California content standards, looking for gaps and creating new descriptions as needed. This work in

progress will continue as additional content standards, performance standards, and statewide assessments are released. After the school is operational, we will develop similar outcomes, learning descriptions, and assessment tools for grades 6, 7, and 8, one year at a time as we expand to middle school.

- Plans to address professional development tailored for school reform and restructuring

Teachers will work in teams across the disciplines to carry out the integrated curriculum, making sure that the curriculum is consistent with the specific academic outcomes for students. Each teacher has or develops an area of expertise which has its impact on team planning and is shared through professional development sessions. Through professional camaraderie, and reliance on positive working relationships, staff welcomes open inquiry and peer feedback and review as a way of insuring that a variety of instructional strategies are employed to accommodate the diverse learning styles of students. In this way, teachers define and identify their individual and collective professional development needs and insure a responsive learning environment for students.

The Center will offer teachers the opportunity to maximize their skills and renew their professional interests through continual learning opportunities at scheduled times throughout the school year. Each staff member will develop a personal plan for professional growth, maintain a professional portfolio, and assume responsibility for attaining the skills and knowledge needed for maximizing success. Each year a pair of teachers will be given subsidies to attend professional conferences and workshops at both the state and national level. Additionally, incentives for one teacher each year to pursue certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will be made available.

The Center will insure that its staff and community have the tools to develop a collaborative, professional working relationship by providing training in leadership and decision-making, constructivist teaching practices, curriculum development, the arts and arts strategies, multicultural development and appreciation, peer coaching and assessment strategies that include development of rubrics, and keeping journals and portfolios. Our planning activities will involve identifying individuals and organizations with success in developing these practices.

Resources to be used for the above

In addition to the people and organizations mentioned above, we have or will be contacting the following: Joan Herman and Pam Aschbacher, Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), UCLA; Jeannie Oakes, UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, Center X; Phyllis Hart, the Achievement Council; Linda Johannesen, The Galef Institute; Eric Premack and Laurie Gardner, Charter School Development Center of the CSU Institute for Educational Reform; California Commission on Teacher Credentialing; California Department of Education; Educational Testing Service; RAND Corporation; Marcia Choo, Director of Museum Programs, and Janet Garfinkle, Director of Youth Education, Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles; Suzanne Hackett, Executive Director, Valley Cultural Center; Elizabeth Waldo, Creative Director, Multi-Cultural Music and Art Foundation of Northridge; Denise Goldman, Skirball Cultural Center; Leslie Thomas, Youth Arts and Education, Cultural Affairs Department, City of Los Angeles; Joan Boyett, Executive Director,

Education Division, Los Angeles Music Center; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Learning Tree; and The Getty Center.

Planning grant resources will be used as consultant fees and consultant expense for teachers to conduct research, make recommendations, and lead or participate in focus groups and meetings with other educators, parents and community members.

2. The Business and Organizational Management Capacity of the School

-Comprehensive design for effective school functioning which supports educational vision

-Development of governance and management structures

-Activities to develop a proposed budget that would demonstrate the fiscal viability of the school

-Location of and plans for the maintenance of school facilities

The vision for the Center is that it will operate as a non-profit corporation, with a governing board that sets policy and has legal and fiscal responsibility for the Center's operation. Members will be nominated and recruited to insure that all community stakeholders are represented and the necessary expertise in legal, financial, educational, development, technology, facilities and real estate, management and leadership, personnel, and public relations is represented. In addition, the board will hire an executive director, advise staff, and fundraise.

The executive director will hire and evaluate staff and consultants and represent the board in matters of day-to-day operations of the Center. Decisions will be made through participatory management with teachers making decisions about the instructional program for which they are responsible and accountable. A lead teacher will serve as facilitator for teacher planning and professional development and represent the teachers on the governing board. Planning time for teachers will be built into the school's daily and yearly calendar.

Members of the Design Team have first-hand experience with several governance models that promote the values of the Center. Though we will continue to research and evaluate others, we find a high level of compatibility with the model developed by Hank Levin through the Accelerated Schools Project. Grounded in the constructivist epistemology, all members of the school community take responsibility for their school with individuals creating personal meaning and new knowledge from collaborative group activities where goal setting, governance, and decision making all focus on powerful learning. Design Team member Carol Wright has attended their Inquiry Process training and along with Toby Bornstein, has worked with schools and district and project leaders in Florida, California, and Kentucky who use the model in conjunction with *Different Ways of Knowing* as the meaningful curriculum and powerful learning component. We will purchase *The Accelerated Schools Resource Guide* and conduct additional interviews with principals of schools using the model. We will also explore the Franklin-Covey Leadership Program that develops leadership, team building, and a culture of shared values.

We have already contacted the Valley Industry Commerce Association (VICA), which as a public policy and non-partisan advocacy organization representing 300 member companies in the San Fernando Valley, has recently released a position paper on education calling for reform. We have had initial conversations with the co-chair of the VICA education committee and are invited to the next education committee and land use committee meeting.

With resources from this planning grant, the Center will continue to meet with individuals and groups to build awareness, support and resources for the Multicultural Learning Center and secure a site in the San Fernando Valley. We will prepare and mail brochures and letters, sponsor community meetings and forums, contact media and meet with local elected representatives. Out of these community meetings and outreach efforts, formal focus groups will be created to address all 14 points of the requirements for the petition. Focus groups will be formed in the following areas: Educational Program, Governance, Finance, Personnel, Physical Operations and Accountability. Each focus group will elect a chairperson who will join the charter school developers on the Design Team. The Design Team will now comprise the founders and community members who collectively possess the requisite expertise to guide the development of the Center through to the granting of the charter. It is expected that some members of the Design Team will ultimately serve the Center as staff and/or board members.

The work of the focus groups will be given to EXED, an organization that the Center will contract with to develop the business plan and three-year budget forecast. Two members of the Design Team will attend a full day workshop on Charter School financial management offered by the Charter Schools Development Center.

- Resources to be used for the above

EXED LLC, will receive \$1,000 for their work, paid for by the planning grant. The Staff of EXED has expertise in fiscal management and may be contracted with further to assist with charter negotiation, financial feasibility studies, marketing and securing capital financing. Once the charter is granted, the Center will out-source its non-instructional services to EXED. They will assist in several areas of operations and management including the functions of accounting, recording keeping, employee benefits, investment and insurance, on-site management of food service, grounds-keeping and plant management, professional services such as legal and audit, purchasing and revenue procurement. In addition, we have and will continue to consult with multiple and varied LAUSD staff in the Valley Cluster offices and the School Reform Unit at the central offices and the Los Angeles County Board of Education. Planning grant resources in the amount of \$500 will be used for instructional materials. In-kind donations for meeting facilities and refreshments will be encouraged from corporate and organizational partners. The SFV Development Group will provide printing, postage, copying, and office space.

3. Collaboration and Networking Strategies

- **Involvement of parents and community members in the development of the charter proposal;**
- **Collective knowledge and experience of developers and/or operators**
- **External means of technical support**
- **Plans for building partnerships and networking systems with the charter school**

Parents will chose to send their children to the Multicultural Learning Center because they believe in the school's philosophy and goals for students. Parents will enter into a cooperative and collaborative partnership with the Center. The partners hold each other accountable for meeting the expectations they have in common. Fundamental to the partnership is the agreement to provide a continuous information exchange on behalf of the social, emotional, physical,

aesthetic, and cognitive development of the child. Parents will participate in training programs offered to the staff and school community as appropriate.

As full partners in the school, parents will commit to participate in the development of the Center by providing time, service, and/or resources. They may serve on the governing board, participate in before- or after-school programs, or facilitate student or school community service projects. They may also contribute services related to their professions or special talents.

The charter developers have broad and deep experience in the educational and school reform arenas. Toby Bornstein has been involved in public education for the past thirty-five years as an elementary and middle school teacher, trainer of pre-service teachers and district leader in mathematics professional development and developed a model parent volunteer program. For the past fourteen years she has been involved with national school reform initiatives, including charter schools, at the elementary and secondary levels in Kentucky, Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and California. Her work with secondary mathematics teachers as part of a national Ford Foundation project provided the research base for many studies on the power of teacher networks in promoting change and established models for professional development and industry-school partnerships. She also helped design and develop a systemic reform initiative that involved all school community stakeholders. She has experience in personnel, training and project management in the private, public and non-profit sectors.

Gayle Nadler is an education writer and editor with experience in public and media relations. She researches and writes about classroom projects, links them to state standards, creates and distributes public relations and press materials, generates grant and conference proposals, and coordinates special events and meetings. She gained much of her public relations experience by working in the public service department of KNBC-TV and with the Santa Barbara County Office of Education, California Coalition of Mathematics, and the Galef Institute.

Julie Flanagan, Robin Potchka, Marty Radanovich, and Carol Wright are practicing educators who have the know-how and experience to develop and guide the educational program with care and sensitivity. They have worked in multicultural schools with students at risk and attained remarkable results, helping to earn state and national honors for their school. Each possesses a Masters Degree, (two in curriculum, one in instructional technology, and one in reading), has multiple experiences using alternative assessment strategies, has designed and conducted professional development and one-on-one coaching. All have received training in facilitative leadership and participated in critical friends groups, using protocols to analyze and discuss student work. Marty and Julie are currently UCLA mentors in the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program. Robin has a Reading Credential and is currently the Literacy Coordinator at her school site and co-authored a book on literature circles to develop comprehension skills and deepen understanding of literature. Carol possesses a School Library Credential, CLAD certification, and has published a book to prepare parents for kindergarten.

Karen De Jarnette brings extensive experience in interdisciplinary assessment and evaluation with specialization in classroom observation. Her doctoral dissertation was titled, *The Arts, Language, and Knowing: An Experimental Study of the Potential of the Visual Arts for Assessing Academic Learning by Language Minority Students*. The findings show that students with

limited English skills, through alternative assessments that included drawing opportunities, knew more about world history than was revealed when they were asked to write about what they knew in a traditional essay format.

The Center will offer extended school services, placing emphasis on after-school programs in the arts, utilizing the talents and resources of volunteers and community organizations. With more adults working outside the home, before- and after-school care is an increasing need for families. Children need a safe, supervised environment that offers them opportunities for productive activity. Such a program will be offered before school and from the end of the school day until 6 p.m. The extended time may be used for doing homework with the assistance of knowledgeable adults, extra assistance with lessons for those that need or want it, and a variety of enrichment activities including dance and music instruction.

Partnerships with several organizations are being pursued to enhance our school's mission of increasing understanding and appreciation among different cultures. We have begun conversations with Marcia Choo, Director of Museum Programs, and Janet Garfinkle, Director of Youth Education, for the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. The museum offers tailor-made programs for adults and youth to experience and discuss issues of racial tolerance. The Tools for Tolerance program for teachers and the Steps to Tolerance program for fifth and sixth graders provide a powerful museum experience followed by facilitated discussion. We are also meeting with Denise Goldman, Skirball Cultural Center, where similar programs are offered.

We are also pursuing partnerships with groups that will help us utilize the arts as tools for developing multicultural understanding and literacy. We are meeting with Suzanne Hackett, Executive Director of the Valley Cultural Center which is closely tied to the West Valley Regional Arts Council, and provides educational programs for children in the arts as well as an artist-in-residency program for local schools. The Multi-Cultural Music and Art Foundation of Northridge funds and promotes multicultural arts. Its New Mission Theater is homebase for multi-ethnic performance ensembles, distinguished artists and art exhibits representing all cultures. In addition to performances, they offer educational programs and use of their facilities. A relationship is in the process of being formed with founder Elizabeth Waldo.

We have had initial conversations and have been invited to collaborate with Rev. W.H. Stevens and Melinda Lewis, two members of Advocates for Valley African American Students (AVAAS) a group of 12 parents and grandparents who are doing research on the underachievement of African American students in the Valley. They are working with valley cluster leaders, Dr. Gene McCallum and Dr. Larry Moore. We are pursuing collaboration with similar groups from the Latino community.

The Motion Picture and Television Fund is a wonderful source for cross-generational collaboration between educators, school children, and senior citizens who have had arts-related careers. Over the next two years, a program called *Aging in Place* will be developed by the Fund, providing facilities for higher functioning residents who are active enough for volunteerism and have a need to continue to contribute to society. We anticipate assistance with classroom projects, performances, and after-school programs and will continue to develop these possibilities of a collaborative arrangement with the Larry Frybarger, Director of Recreation.

The faculty will be encouraged to establish or maintain professional affiliations with national state and local subject-matter and school reform organizations such as National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), American Education Research Association (AERA) and within California, BTSA and CFASST (California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers, and California Leadership Academy). The developers already participate or have built relationships with multiple California universities and organizations as mentioned earlier. We will participate in the Galef Institute's national website, DWoKnet, and select from those listed on ThinkQuest, a site that sponsors contests for exemplary websites and provides resources for teachers

The Center is a member of California Network of Educational Charters (CANEC) and will continue to collaborate with CDE staff, the Charter Schools Development Center, CANEC, and the LAUSD School Reform Unit for technical support.

4. Overall Program Evaluation

- A comprehensive program assessment structure

- Outline of measurements used to evaluate success of the charter school's program

Our vision of community is fulfilled through a culture of cooperation and collaboration rather than one of compliance and complaint. This is possible when all students, staff, parents, the Board, and community partners are engaged in on-going observation, reflection, and self-assessment to insure that the goals of the Center are met. This process requires open inquiry through analysis of data collected from multiple sources, informal and formal meetings, and quarterly reports, all of which are summarized in an annual report and audit. The accountability focus group will tailor and expand upon the following beginning assessment measurements.

- Student achievement scores on SAT/9 and other assessments of the STAR system will increase steadily with an overall school-wide increase of no less than 5% each year, and a correlative reduction in the achievement gap.
- Students, teachers, and parents report acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and abilities including proficiency in a second language and increased multicultural understanding.
- Cooperation, collaboration, and resourcefulness, are the hallmark of learning relationships among and across stakeholder groups; all stakeholders take pride in *their* school.
- The Center's environment is safe, beautiful, and welcoming.
- The Center is financially solvent, its mission clear and obvious, and it is well managed by a professional, knowledgeable staff with stable leadership.
- The Center meets all local, state, and federal requirements.

C. Support for Getting the Charter Petition Circulated and Approved

1. Specific Activities and Work to Be Done

- **Work that assists in meeting the required 14 elements**
- **Activities and strategies for the charter approval process**
- **Strategies for recruiting students**

Through the work of the Design Team and its focus groups, all 14 elements will be addressed, feedback received from the community and alternative strategies developed as needed. A writing

team consisting of Toby Bornstein and Gayle Nadler will work with each focus group to develop the charter petition and circulate drafts for feedback from the full Design Team, community members, and LAUSD staff and Board adhering to its eleven-step review process. Our process of community meetings and outreach will have drawn the interest of families to enroll their children at the Center. Additional community informational meetings will be held to invite enrollment.

2. Justification for Use of Grant Funds

How grant funds will be used to fulfill educational vision, support other variables of effective schools, support research activities, support petition approval activities.

The grant funds will be used to pay teacher consultants to conduct the necessary research in the development and refinement of the educational program and school organization. A writing consultant will also be compensated to support the work of the focus groups and the development of the petition. Coordination of community meetings, district liaison, and overall project coordination will be the responsibility of a paid half-time coordinator. Though some members of the Design Team will work as paid consultants, they are also donating many in-kind hours. Local corporations and organizations and the SFV Development group will contribute meeting space and refreshments as in-kind donations. A small amount of funds will be used to purchase learning materials for research and distribution at community meetings and for travel.

III. Self-Assessment and Procedures for Monitoring Progress Towards Completion of the Charter Proposal

- Evaluation of the quality of the charter proposal itself (Including the 14 elements)
- Timeline for completion of specific tasks
- Procedure for evaluating quality of work
- Adherence to required evaluations of the grant
- Process for how the grant money will be spent

Evaluation will be an on-going process as noted above. The Design Team will assure work quality and adherence to grant guidelines, with each focus group chairperson responsible for his or her particular area. Assistance from the LAUSD School Reform Unit, EXED, LLC, and colleagues at several local charter schools who were pioneers in the charter school movement will provide invaluable guidance. The chairpersons of the Fiscal and Personnel focus groups will share budget oversight with the SFV Development Group executive director. Written contracts for consultant services will be executed to insure mutual understandings.

Project Timeline
18 months beginning July 1, 1999

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Quarter 5	Quarter 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene Design Team • Research curriculum and websites • Evaluate language immersion programs • Research/evaluate school organization designs • Begin site identification • Research governance models • Develop brochures and outreach materials • Meet with stakeholders and LAUSD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Special Ed. requirements • Revisit performance outcomes • Research & compile assessment tools • Align proposed curriculum • Hold community meetings • Form focus groups • Contract with writer • Meet with stakeholders and LAUSD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research professional development programs & contact NBPTS • Convene expanded Design Team • Focus groups meet • Attend finance workshop & CANEC conference • Meet with stakeholders and LAUSD • Submit grants to secure start-up funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin site negotiation • Seven focus groups develop draft documents • Design Team evaluates full document/ meet with EXED • Evaluate business plan scenarios with EXED • Circulate drafts for feedback • Meet with stakeholders and LAUSD • Submit grants to secure start-up funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise, revisit and rewrite petition • Distribute final drafts for feedback • Meet with stakeholders and LAUSD • Develop CDE implementation grant • Submit grants to secure start-up funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with LAUSD for final revisions • Submit final petition to LAUSD • Submit implementation grant to CDE

4000 series, Books and supplies

\$500 is requested for the purchase of *The Accelerated School Resource Guide* and other resource materials not available on the Internet. Selected documents will be copied for distribution to focus group members and community stakeholders. Office expense, copying, postage, and meeting refreshments will be an in-kind donation of the SFV Development Group and organizational partners.

5000 series, Services and other

We are requesting funds for teacher researchers in the amount of \$10,000 for development and refinement of the educational capacity and school design. An additional \$2,500 is requested to contract with a writer to work with the executive director to compile the work of the focus groups and incorporate feedback from reviewers. Consultant expenses for the above are estimated at \$350. EXED will be paid \$1,000 as a consultant to develop the business plan and 3-year budget forecast. An additional \$20,000 is requested to support the work of Toby Bornstein, who is currently volunteering half of her time to serve as executive director of the SFV Development Group. In-kind contributions of \$25,000 and \$500 are for consultant time and expense respectively, by the executive director and Karen De Jarnette, Design Team assessment specialist. Travel to the CSDC financial management workshop for two Design Team members is estimated at \$600. Travel for two members to the CANEC conference in 2000 will be provided as an in-kind contribution of the Development Group and is estimated at \$1,000. In-kind contributions for meeting facilities by partners and provision of office space and expense by the SFV Development Group is budgeted at \$4,000.

7000 series, Other Outgoing

CSDC fees for the finance workshop for members is requested for two persons. The developers will provide an in-kind contribution of \$520 for conference registration for two Design Team members to attend the year 2000 CANEC conference.